

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8556

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS EC

SUBJ: MINGOV JARRIN DEFINES ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL ACTIVITY

REF: A) QUITO 8382 B) QUITO 8397 C) QUITO 5731

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT COL. BOLIVAR JARRIN ANNOUNCED DEC. 7 THAT THOSE INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED NOV. 27 (SEE REFTELS) WOULD BE TRIED WITH THE FULL FORCE OF THE LAW FOR SUBVERSION. HE ACCUSED THE GROUP OF INTENDING TO BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO MEDIA REPORTS, JARRIN DEFINED THE KINDS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY THAT WILL BE PERMITTED OR REPRESENTED BY THE GOE. HE CONCLUDED HIS REMARKS BY RECONFIRMING THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO FULFILL ITS PLEDGE TO RETURN ECUADOR TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE BUT ADDED THE CONDITION THAT THE TRANSFER OF POWER DEPENDS UPON THE "MAINTENANCE OF THE ATMOSPHERE OF PEACE, ORDER AND TRANQUILITY." JARRIN INSISTED THAT THE GOE WILL STRONGLY PUNISH THOSE WHOSE ACTIVITIES EXCEED THOSE PERMITTED BY THE GOVERNMENT END SUMMARY

2. MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT COL. BOLIVAR JARRIN ANNOUNCED DEC. 7 THAT THE GROUP ARRESTED DURING A POLITICAL MEETING NOV 27 WOULD BE TRIED FOR "SUBVERSION ACCORDING TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY." JARRING ACCUSED THE ARRESTEES OF MEETING "CLANDESTINELY AND SECRETLY" TO UNLEASH ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES INCLUDING STRIKES, KIDNAPPINGS, TERRORISM, RUMOR CAMPAIGNS, AND INFILTRATION AND SABOTAGE OF GOE AGENCIES. JARRING CLAIMED THAT MEMBERS OF THE

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GROUP HAD BEEN MEETING SINCE 1973 AND THAT THERE WAS A

DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAMOUS RIOBAMBA BISHOPS'
MEETING LAST AUGUST (QUITO 5731).

3. JARRIN NOTED THAT ALL GOVERNMENTS ARE OBLIGED TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS. IN ORDER THAT THERE WOULD BE NO QUESTIONS JARRIN DEFINED PERMITTED POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS:

A. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION WITH THE ONLY LIMIT OR CONDITION BEING THAT TO EXPRESS THE TRUTH, AND RESPECT THE DIGNITY AND RIGHTS OF OTHERS;

B. FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, WITH THE ONLY REQUIREMENT BEING PREVIOUS NOTIFICATION OF THE AUTHORITIES;

C. FULL IDEOLOGICAL FREEDOM; AND

D. LIBERTY OF ASSOCIATION, SUBJECT TO LEGAL NORMS."

4. ACTIVITIES SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED ARE:

A. STREET DEMONSTRATIONS;

B. SECRET OF CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES;

C. SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS SUCH AS RIOTS, SABOTAGE, TERRORISM, USURPATION OF LANDS OR GOODS, ILLEGAL STRIKES AND, IN SUM, DISORIENTING THE CITIZENRY, AND CREATING CHAOS OR CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ECUADOREANS;

D. MEDIA CAMPAIGNS, INCLUDING ANONYMOUS MISREPRESENTATION OF THE TRUTH, WITH THE INTENTION OF DISORIENTING PUBLIC OPINION;

E. CAMPAIGNS TO BRING INTO DISREPUTE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR INSTITUTIONS, THEREBY UNJUSTIFIABLY TARNISHING THE IMAGE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS MEMBERS;

F. LACK OF RESPECT OF THE CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES THROUGH GROTESQUE EXPRESSIONS OR HAUGHTY ATTITUDES;
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5. JARRIN SAID THAT HAS ALWAYS, THE GOE REMAINS OPEN TO HEAR REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS BUT THAT IT CANNOT ACCEPT INSOLENCE OR THREATS. PROHIBITED ACTIVITY HE PROMISED, WILL BE STRONGLY REPRESSED.

6. JARRIN REITERATED THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ITS PLAN TO RETURN ECUADOR TO

CONSTITUTIONAL RULE BY JANUARY 1978. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT "THE COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF THIS PLAN IS NATURALLY CONDITIONED ON THE MAINTENANCE OF AN ATMOSPHERE OF PEACE, ORDER AND TRANQUILITY, INDISPENSABLE ELEMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND CULMINATION OF THE PROCESS OF JURIDICAL RESTRUCTURING NOW UNDER WAY."

7. JARRING SAID THAT THE ECUADOREAN BODY POLITIC HAD DIVIDED ITSELF INTO FOUR SEPARATE GROUPS WHEN THE GOE ANNOUNCED ITS PLAN FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RULE: THOSE FAVORING THE PLAN (THE MAJORITY OF ECUADOREANS), THOSE WANTING A CONTINUATION OF MILITARY RULE, A MIXED GROUP OF EXTREME RIGHTISTS AND LEFTISTS WANTING CHAOS AND OPPOSING BOTH THE RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE AND A CONTINUATION OF MILITARY RULE, AND FINALLY, A GROUP DEMANDING THE IMMEDIATE SURRENDER OF POWER TO A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT. INCLUDED IN THE LAST GROUP, ACCORDING TO JARRIN, ARE THE VELASQUISTAS AND THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PNR) OF FORMER PRESIDENT CARLOS JULIO AROSEMENA. HE ACCUSED THOSE TWO PARTIES OF WANTING TO CREATE CHAOS FOR THEIR OWN ENDS. (THE GOE STILL HOLDS TWO PNR LEADERS UNDER ARREST.)

8. COMMENT: JARRING'S WELL PUBLICIZED COMMENTARY IS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE GOE PERCEIVES THE THREAT TO ITS STABILITY FROM "SUBVERSIVE" GROUPS TO BE SIGNIFICANT AND THAT IT IS SERIOUS IN ITS INTENTION TO RESTRICT POLITICAL ACTIVITY TO WHAT IT CONSIDERS ACCEPTABLE BOUNDS. AS EVIDENCE OF ITS INTENT, THE GOE WILL TRY ITS ARRESTEES FOR EXCEEDING THOSE LIMITS, ALTHOUGH UNDER WHAT SPECIFIC STATUTES IN VIEW OF THE SKETCHY EVIDENCE THUS FAR CITED IS NOT CLEAR.

9. BY SPECIFICALLY DESCRIBING ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPT-
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ABLE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES, JARRIN DID NOT INTEND TO CHANGE THE RULES OF THE GAME BUT RATHER DEFINE THE HERETOFORE IMPLICIT RULES UNDER WHICH THE GOE HAS BEEN OPERATING OF LATE. WE SEE NO INDICATION THAT THE GOE INTENDS TO LIMIT THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF ECUADOR'S TRADITIONAL PARTIES (UNLESS THEY BREAK THE NOW EXPLICIT RULES) BUT RATHER WILL ENCOURAGE THOSE PARTIES TO DEVELOP THEMSELVES IN PREPARATION FOR THE ELECTIONS CONTEMPLATED BY THE GOE PLAN FOR RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOE REGARDS AT LEAST TWO POLITICAL PARTIES, THE PNR AND THE VELASQUISTAS, AS GROUPS WHOSE ACTIVITY AT LEAST PARTIALLY EXCEEDS ACCEPTABLE LIMITS.

10. JARRIN'S COMMENT THAT THE RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE CANNOT TAKE PLACE DURING A PERIOD OF POLITICAL UNREST IS

SURE TO BE SEIZED UPON BY SOME TO CHARGE THAT JARRIN IS LAYING THE
GROUNDWORK FOR THE MILITARY TO EXCUSE ITS INDEFINITE RE-
TENTION OF POWER.
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